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**From:** Hal Candee  
**Sent:** Mon 12/14/2015 11:23:14 PM  
**Subject:** Senator Feinstein's meeting tomorrow on CA Drought Bill

Dear friends:

Senator Feinstein's office called me Friday evening to further discuss Senator Feinstein's press release on Friday promising a brand new version of the Senate Drought Bill by early this week that has final "sign off" by the federal and state administrations. While I know last week's slurs and attacks by House Republicans against Senator Feinstein have upended many things, and in some twisted way it seems it is now the federal government that is suffering the consequences for those unwarranted attacks, as a stakeholder in California whose clients have a very deep interest in any new federal legislation on the California drought, I think it is totally inappropriate for any federal agencies to be pressured into making commitments on new legislative language affecting Delta operations, refuge water deliveries, CVPIA implementation, water transfer environmental reviews and similar critical issues before key stakeholders have even had a chance to SEE the new language.

Senator Feinstein promised "regular order" which means NEXT YEAR. Even as of today, the Senate Energy Committee has not received a formal request for a markup of a revised CA drought bill, and no one expects any such markup before the Senate returns in the second week of January. To suggest that NMFS, FWS, Reclamation, OMB, CEQ, EPA, the Justice Department, the Corps and other critical federal agencies should not have the opportunity to receive input from knowledgeable third parties before finalizing an Administration Position on brand new congressional language affecting the largest federal water project in the West is absurd. Why should the Obama Administration consent to that? Do Senators Boxer, Reid, Cantwell, Wyden and Merkley want you to rush to judgment on new draft language before the Pacific Fishery Management Council or the US Department of Justice or the commercial & sport fishing industries have even had a chance to review the language and identify potential risks and pitfalls? If there is new language implicating the CVPIA and potentially burdening the Interior Department's ability to meet its statutory obligation to deliver full Level 2 & Level 4 water supplies to federal and state wildlife refuges, why can't your agencies take the time to canvass the full Central Valley Joint Venture for their views on the language? After all, the CVPIA itself requires Interior to work with the Joint Venture. Why must the input of Delta stakeholders, fishing & refuge groups, Indian Tribes and others be set aside because of an arbitrary deadline about secret draft bill language?

I offer these comments and questions in my individual capacity, but as someone who has worked closely on these drought proposals for many years now. I appreciate all of the enormous efforts your agencies have made over the past 3 years to daylight, explain and critique the previous drafts of this lengthy and complex “federal drought language.” I hope you will be able take the time needed to craft a thoughtful and unified federal position before any new commitments are made on any new, secret bill language.

Thank you for considering my views.

Hal

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